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MISCELLANEOUS, &c.

I. *Papers of the late Mr. William Moorcroft.*

IN December last (1830) a communication was made to the council of the Royal Geographical Society, by Major Archer, a member recently returned from India, stating that Mr. Moorcroft, the well known Indian traveller, had, after his examination of Lake Manasawara, as detailed in the Asiatic Researches, penetrated into the Thibetian province of Ladakh, resided some time at its capital, Leh, and thence proceeded to Bokhara, where he died ; and as the particulars of this expedition had never yet been published, it was submitted that an examination of whatever correspondence relating to it might be found in the India House, or could be procured on inquiry made in India, could scarcely fail to elicit new and valuable information. And the council having approved of this suggestion, the necessary steps were taken to act on it, and a mass of papers has thus been obtained, of which it may be interesting to members, and to the public, to have some general account. They were supplied by the favour of W. Astell, Esq., late chairman of the Honourable the Court of East India Directors, and W. Stanley Clarke, Esq., a director, to whom Mr. Barrow made the requisite applications ; and having been selected from the entire amount of Mr. Moorcroft's correspondence preserved in the Company's records, and in great measure also transcribed by Lieutenant Brand, R. N. (to whom this laborious task was proposed, and who executed it with great zeal, and altogether gratuitously), they have been since revised and arranged by the Honourable Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, who has added some explanatory notes where they appeared wanting.

The ostensible object of Mr. Moorcroft's journey was to purchase horses for the Company, with a view as well to improve the breed as to increase the numbers in its stud, of which he was one of the superintendents in Upper India. Besides this, he was to report on the openings which he might meet with for trade amongst a people of whom so little was then, and still is, known. And subordinate to both objects was the determination of positions, and a geographical description of the countries visited. With such a multiplicity of objects before him, his papers are necessarily miscellaneous and of unequal value : yet in selecting from them it has been thought only just to his memory, and to the opportunity thus possessed of examining papers which are not likely in any other way to see the light, not to be too fastidious in the choice ; and whatever appeared either new or curious, or in any

way instructive, has been taken. His first route was to Leh, in the neighbourhood of which he arrived in September, 1820; and, after some hesitation and explanations, was admitted into the town. His design was to penetrate thence, through Chinese Thibet, by way of Yarkund, (which, he was given to understand, is the seat of a great fair, resorted to by merchants from all parts of Central Asia,) to Bokhara; and it appears from his correspondence, that for a considerable time he entertained sanguine hopes of being able to effect this. Ultimately, however, he failed, as he thought, through the jealousy of the native, chiefly Cashmerian, merchants, who were afraid of losing their monopoly of communication in this direction, and who encouraged, in consequence, the suspicion with which the Chinese authorities received his applications for permission to pass as a merchant. Struggling with these difficulties, he remained at Leh till September, 1822, extending his influence by successful practice as a surgeon, collecting hearsay information respecting the country wherever he could procure it, and also making, in person, such short excursions within the district of Ladakh as he could obtain permission for from the resident authorities. He then departed for Cashmere, by the ordinary route between the two places, which he represents as being the great channel by which the latter is supplied with the Thibet shawl wool used in its manufactures; but he gives no detailed account of his journey. From Cashmere his purpose was to penetrate to Bokhara by Caubul; but here again he met with great difficulties, and was ultimately detained another year there, to the great dissatisfaction of the Rajah, who was very jealous of him. Early in the year 1824, it is mentioned in a letter from Lord Amherst to the Court of Directors, that he was recalled, with a discretionary power, however, of proceeding, if, before receiving the order, he had penetrated to Caubul; but it is doubtful whether this summons ever reached him. A short memorandum of his death is contained in the correspondence of the Calcutta Government for 1827, stating it to have occurred in March, 1825, at a place called Anghok (presumed to be in Balkh), not at Bokhara, as Major Archer had been informed; nor does it anywhere appear whether he had previously reached Bokhara, or was still on his road to it. None of the papers as yet in the India House relate, indeed, to this latter portion of his journey: the latest dispatch from him being dated Cashmere, October, 1823; and a further inquiry, therefore, made in India, either among the government records, or in Balkh, through the medium of native traders, or agents, might yet bring to light some interesting documents.

Those at present possessed by the Society naturally arrange themselves under three heads:—1. The journey to Leh, and account of Ladakh given with it: 2. Such hearsay notices of Chinese Tartary

as were there procured: and, 3. Papers transmitted regarding Cashmere, its soil, productions, manufactures, trade, &c. several of which are very curious and interesting. Selections from each will be published in future volumes of these Transactions, as may be found expedient; and, in the mean time, one extract is subjoined.

Notice on Khoten.

‘ Dated Leh, April 15, 1821.

‘ Marco Polo calls Kotan (Khoten) the principal city of the province of that name. The Chinese general, who conquered the country of Kashgar in 1757, appears to regard it (Khoten) as a place of small consequence; when, in writing to the emperor from the camp before Hashar (Kashgar), he says, ‘ Je supplie votre Majesté de ne rien exiger cette année de Hortien (Khoten), d’Aksou, de Sailim, de Koutche, et des autres petites villes de ces cantons. Elles sont presqu’entièrement ruinées.’—Mem. tom. i. p. 392. Marsden’s Marco Polo, p. 134.

‘ From information given by a respectable Tooranee merchant, who is acquainted with all the places just mentioned, it appears that Aksou (Aksoo) and its district contain about thirty thousand houses; Sarlien (Saceram) only from two to three hundred; whilst Koutche (Koochar) has about six thousand houses. It is not only possible that the meaning of the Chinese general may have been somewhat strained by the French translator, in causing the former to represent Khoten as one of the small towns in this country; but it is rendered probable by Aksoo and Khoten, districts containing each, upon the lowest calculation, a population greatly exceeding a hundred thousand individuals, being classed in the same rank with Saceram, which contains not more than two thousand inhabitants. But Khoten might have stood in need of repose from taxation after having experienced the presence of a Chinese army as an enemy, when countries visited by one as a friend recover not the effects of its rapaciousness, even within thirty years. It may appear audacious enough, after what has been said by Marco Polo respecting the city of Khoten, much later by the Chinese general, whose opportunities of obtaining local information must have been ample, and even in the present century, by respectable English writers, that I should venture to express a doubt of such a city as Khoten being in existence. But it is not clear that the Venetian traveller did actually visit Khoten. The meaning of the Chinese general may have been perverted, or carelessly expressed by himself; or, accustomed to see cities of immense populousness, he may have considered those of which the inhabitants could not be numbered by laks, as of little importance; and our travellers must have gleaned their information regarding a country so far removed

from the path, under great disadvantage. It is not uncommon for the natives of Asia to call the principal city of a country by the name of the country itself, notwithstanding the former has a different appellation ; as, for instance, an inhabitant of Delhi, on being asked the name of his residence, will occasionally answer Hindoostan ; and thus the name of Khoten may incidentally have been applied to one of the cities of the country. But setting aside further endeavours to reconcile accounts with facts, I must observe, that my scepticism is founded upon information given by a traveller who has twice visited all the cities of Khoten in the capacity of a merchant, and who asserts that no city of the name of Khoten is now to be found in the country so called ; and his testimony is supported by the intelligence procured respecting Khoten from a native of this province in 1812, by Meer Izzut Oollah Khan, at Yarkund, which agrees in all its main points with that related by my informant. If ever a city called Khoten did exist, its name must have been changed, no extraordinary occurrence in China, or it must have been destroyed by some disaster. It is a matter of notoriety to travellers in Khoten, that a large city there is buried under a drift of sand ; and my informant speaks positively of this fact, although unacquainted with its name, or with the period or manner in which the event took place. This indifference in an individual, extremely inquisitive and intelligent, is produced in a great measure by the policy of the Chinese government, which punishes severely any person who ventures to dig on the site of the city in search of treasures, and even inquiries are not unattended with risk.

‘ Such a catastrophe, as the sudden overwhelming of a large city by a sand drift, is no more uncommon in these sandy countries than the overwhelming of cities in Europe, as Herculaneum, Pompeii, &c. by eruptions from a volcano. Meerza Hydur, the cousin of the emperor Babur, and the general of Rasheed Khan, a descendant of Chungiz Khan, reports that Saceram was suddenly buried by a mass of sand.

‘ The present cities of Khoten are six in number, viz. Karakash, Elechee, Yooroong-kash, Cheera, Kurreea, and Yungeekishlak.

‘ Karakash, or city of the Black River, so called from being situated upon the banks of this stream, is the first met with on the road from Yarkund, in the direction of east, and at the distance of seven days’ journey. It contains three thousand houses, without numbering those of the district which belongs to it.

‘ The second city, on the same road, distant from Karakash ten or twelve kos, and likewise to the east, is Elechee, containing about six thousand houses. Two Umbaus, or Chinese residents from Peking, with five hundred troops, are constantly stationed at this

city, which is likewise the head-quarters of the Moosulman governor of that province.

‘ The third city, or Yooroong-kash, the city of the rapid river, is only a kos (mile and a half English, nearly), and a half distant from Elechee to the east, and contains a thousand houses.

‘ Cheera, the fourth city, is situated to the south three days journey distant from Yooroong-kash, contains two thousand houses, and its district is particularly famous for the production of silk.

‘ Kurreea, the fifth city, is distant from Cheera four days journey, in the direction of south-south-east, and contains four thousand houses.

‘ Yungee-kishlak, the sixth city, is four days journey distant from Kurreea, in the direction of south-south-east, and contains a thousand houses. My reporter cannot form any satisfactory estimate of the number of the inhabitants of the districts belonging to the cities. In the mountains there are from three to four hundred houses of shepherds; but by far the greatest proportion of this very numerous class is nomadic, without other habitations than tents. Rating the population of the cities by six persons to each house, which, from what I have seen of the towns of this country (Ladakh), is rather below than above the average, it will amount to one hundred and two thousand individuals, independently of the inhabitants of the districts.

‘ The road from Yarkund to Karakash is divided into stages, or journies, of which the following are usually taken by travellers not encumbered by baggage.

From Yarkund to Karakash (Karghalick ?)	.	20	kos.
“ Karakash to Choulak	.	5	
“ Choulak to Gooma	.	20	
“ Gooma to Moojee	.	15	
“ Moojee to Pialma	.	20	
“ Pialma to Zawa	.	20	
“ Zawa to Karakash	.	12	
—			112 kos.

‘ But a kafilah can with difficulty make more than ten or twelve kos in a day. At the distance of seven kos from Karakash, on the way to Choulak, the face of the country is covered with a deep fine sand, extremely light, and so subject to shift and to efface all common indications of a road, as to have rendered it necessary to mark its line by a double row of wooden posts, which extend without interruption as far as Karakash.

‘ The greatest length of the country of Khoten is about twelve days journey from west to east, its breadth only two days journey from south to north.

‘ It is bounded by the mountains of Tibut to the south, by the country of Aksoo to the north, to the west by Yarkund, and to the east by China proper. It is only forty days journey from Peking, *but the road is interdicted.*’

‘ At eight days journey from Yungee-kishlak, in the direction of south-south-east, is a district which abounds with gold in grains and masses, in collecting which five hundred to a thousand men are constantly employed on the part of the Emperor of China. Khoten is supposed to possess this and other metals ; but if the inhabitants be acquainted with any mines, they carefully conceal them from the knowledge of their rulers, lest they should be compelled to work them on the account of the emperor *.

‘ The Dereas Kara, or Black River, contains in its bed pebbles, called in Toorkee, yushm : such stones as are nearly transparent, perfectly white, and free from specks or stains, are highly esteemed in China, and Chinese guards are constantly stationed along the banks of the river to prevent private individuals procuring any, as these jaspers, or agates, formerly an object of commerce, are now reserved for the use of the emperor alone.

‘ The workmen employed in searching for them are compelled every day to take the whole of their prizes to a Chinese officer, specially appointed to examine and select them ; and when a stone of extraordinary bulk and clearness is presented to him, he always welcomes its arrival with a most profound obeisance.

‘ The climate of Khoten is dry and particularly salubrious, the winters are colder, and the summers hotter than those of Ladakh.

‘ The soil, most luxuriantly productive, is very sandy, with water near the surface, well tasted and wholesome. Almost every house is provided with a well. The inhabitants are represented as being generally above the middle size : the males well formed and robust, with agreeable features and complexions of red and white : the females of delicate and elegant forms, and remarkable for the beauty of their eyes, eye-brows, and hair, the latter of which is carefully preserved in the greatest possible luxuriance of growth : and though not confined to their apartments or concealed, they are not subjected to the drudgery of out-door-work, like their Tibutee neighbours of the same sex. The spinning of cotton affords them much in-door employment, as also the rearing of silk-worms and the winding of the thread ; but the men gather and bring in the leaves of the mulberry for feeding the worms. Marco Polo says, that the people of Khoten are Mahometans ; the translator of

* ‘ At Aksoo there is a mine of rubies which is not worked. Near Eela, a short time ago, a rich vein of silver was discovered accidentally, and information of it was given to the Umbau, or resident, who extracted from it about a thousand Sers for his own use, and then, closing it, forbade its further exploration. Intelligence of this transaction was, however, conveyed to Peking ; and this concealment being a capital crime, the Umbau was poisoned by order of the emperor with a cup of medicated tea.

Abulghazi also observes, that ‘les habitans de la ville font pour la plupart profession du culte de Mahomet.’—Marsden, vol. i. p. 153; and a preceding sentence in the same quotation leads the reader to believe that the Kalmuks formed the smaller part of the population; which is affirmed by Tooranee merchants to have been the case when Khoten was conquered by the Chinese. But the victors deported all the Kalmuks of that country to the cities* of Eela and their districts, in the latter of which their population amounts to about two hundred thousand families, whose residences extend for six days’ journey from the cities of Eela in every direction. The breeding of cattle forms the principal employment of the Kalmuks. These are camels, horses, cows, sheep, and goats; and for every hundred head they raise, they pay one to the emperor as a quit rent.

‘The Kalmuks† bring annually from ten to twenty thousand three-year-old geldings to Eela for sale;—they are ordinarily from thirteen and a half to fourteen hands high, and are sold in droves at about twelve for a yamboo, or ingot of silver, which, at the currency of one hundred and eighty rupees, gives an average of fifteen rupees a horse. These horses are taken to Aksoo, Yarkund, Kashgar, Indejan, Khoten, and even to Bokhara, and resold principally for carrying loads of merchandise.

‘The warlike character and vast numbers of the wandering and widely-spread family of the Kalmuks, which are scattered over a large portion of Russia, Siberia, and China, afford occasional employment to the Chinese government in practising means to prevent their military spirit producing the political aggrandizement of the Kalmuk nation. One expedient is that of dividing their numbers by transporting their masses, by portions, into different parts of the empire when they become formidably great in any one district. The other—and for the honour of human nature one would wish it were an exaggeration—consists in destroying the chief of each horde; for it is asserted, that when the son of a chief attains that age at which his mother transfers him from her care to that of his father, or from ten to fifteen, the latter is always taken off by poison‡ administered by order of the Chinese

* ‘Several cities united to form the city situated on the river of this name.

† ‘The Kalmuks are employed also as cavalry in the armies of China, and form part of the immense garrison, or standing army, of Eela. The other troops in its cities, composed of Mangoo, of the same family with the emperor, are cavalry armed with swords alone. The Sooloongs are cavalry who use only bows and arrows, and the Karakuthaees are infantry who are alone armed with guns. In former times, by Kuthaee was meant (as reported to me) the countries occupied by the Moosulmans on this side of the Great Wall, and by Karakuthaee the country within it, but the distinction has now merged in the general term of Kuthaee.

‡ ‘The following is the account given by Mr. Moorcroft’s informant of the manner in which this crime is effected. The whole story is chiefly curious as showing the

government, and generally in tea. His son, who succeeds to his rank, deprived of the power of profiting by his father's experience, acquires information only from his own opportunity and energies; and, whatever his mental acquisitions may be, he generally dies before they are communicated to his heir. By this nefarious system the Chinese prevent, as they conceive, the accumulation of much wisdom and experience in any Kalmuk chief, and the risk of its producing the political elevation of the Kalmuk race.

The Moosulman population of Khoten now, as in the time of Marco Polo, are principally engaged in works of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and have little disposition for the profession of arms.

The domestic animals of the country of Khoten are horses, in great numbers, of a hardy kind, but of a small size. Yaks are bred on the mountains, and common neat cattle on the plains. Sheep of the Doomba, or broad-tailed variety, are reared in vast numbers, but the tails of these are much smaller than those of the Kosak Chief;—their wool is very fine but short, as it is shorn twice a-year.

opinion of the Chinese government entertained by its distant subjects;—“The Kalmuk chief is informed by a message couched in terms most complimentary to his conduct, that his presence at court will be highly gratifying to the emperor; and if the chief plead indisposition, he is allowed to defer his visit to the second year, but no longer. On his arrival at Peking he is received with the greatest attention and respect, is lodged and entertained at the expense of the emperor, speedily introduced to the sovereign, is most graciously noticed and loaded with presents, at least to double the value of those he has offered to the acceptance of the monarch, and after a residence of a stated period, seldom exceeding eight days, has his audience of leave, and departs with some increase of titular honour. At every military station, or corps de garde, on the road of which there are said to be the enormous number of three hundred and sixty between Peking and Yarkund, he is furnished with all the accommodations he and his attendants can stand in need of, and amongst which tea constitutes a never-failing article.

To some officer of considerable rank the imperial order to administer poison to the unsuspecting Kalmuk has been previously communicated. Its effects, though slow, are sure. So familiar, it would seem, are the Chinese with this instrument of destruction, that its very agents occasionally become its voluntary victims. For when the Chinese governors of places, far removed from the seat of supreme government, have abused their power, and received such an intimation as convinces them that the tribunal to which they are responsible have proof of their delinquency, they, if their crime be of a capital nature, generally prefer the poisoned cup, which preserves their persons from public disgrace and their property from confiscation, to the risk of losing life, honour, and estates, by the hand of the executioner. I speak here from reports of transactions stated to have occurred on the frontier I am about to approach. After the heir of the Kalmuk chief has performed the funeral duties, he repairs to Eela, and from the Joongjoong, Umbau, or principal Chinese resident, receives the investiture of his late father's office, accompanied by the usual insignia and dresses, along with a donation of ingots of silver, on the part of the emperor, proportioned to his rank and expenses. Gratified by his early elevation, he probably inquires not minutely into its immediate cause, and occupied in the indulgence of those appetites, which for the most part predominate in wealthy and uneducated individuals during the early portion of their lives, he may not feel the impulse of ambition till he nearly reaches that period when its birth and his life are about to be extinguished together.

‘ Shawl-wool goats are not less numerous than sheep, and their fleeces are reported to be at least equal to those of Ladakh.

‘ Wild animals of various kinds are abundant. Camels have two humps; are generally brown, but sometimes of a white colour. They are of a large size, and so swift that men on the horses of the country can seldom overtake them if the camels get a little advantage in the start. They are pursued by hunters as game, their flesh being said to be particularly well flavoured and much relished by the natives. Cloth is made from their wool.

‘ The Goorkhur, or wild ass, is common; as also are many varieties of deer, amongst which is the musk deer, the produce of which is proverbially fine. From a description of the stripes on the skin of a tiger, it would appear that the royal tiger roams on the mountains of Khoten. Leopards and wolves are numerous. Bears are of a yellowish colour, and not very large;—there are no black ones. Foxes, hares, and smaller quadrupeds are in abundance. The large variety of Francolin, which, I believe, has never been described, frequents the summits of the mountains; and the lesser kinds, with partridges and other feathered game, are found in great numbers lower down and near the plains.

‘ Fruit-trees of almost all the sorts common in the southern parts of Europe are raised in the gardens of Khoten, as vines which are vastly productive, pomegranates, plumbs, peaches, apricots, pears, and apples. Melons are of good size, and well flavoured. Wheat, barley, maize, pease, and carrots are cultivated largely; but there is not any rice grown, the soil being too dry for this grain. The few forests existing scarcely deserve the name, there being few timber-trees in them, and these are of the same character with those of Ladakh, as poplars and willows; but the mulberry abounds everywhere; and a vast quantity of silk is raised in this province, though a fine white cotton would seem to be its staple produce.

‘ The manufactures of Khoten consist principally of woollen, camlet, cotton, and silk cloths.

‘ The woollens got up in the loom are generally of a thick and coarse texture, or else thin and flimsy, and as yet none of these fabrics approach the nature of European broad cloths. But the felted cloths are large, fine, and well got up. Cotton cloths of a coarse kind are made in vast quantities, both for home use and for exportation. They are sent from every house to Peking in commutation for the capitation-tax, in Toorkee called Alban.

‘ The coin of Khoten is of silver and of copper;—the former, if coin it may properly be called, is in the shape of a boat, with the value stamped in Chinese characters on the concave side; the latter is struck in dies with a hole in the centre of each piece, which is of

low value. Uncoined gold in grains and masses is also a medium of bargain and sale.

‘ It is not possible to ascertain or even to make any probable estimate of the amount of the revenue drawn by China from Khoten annually ; but there are two direct taxes, viz. the Alban, or poll tax, varying in assessment, as it would seem, according to the age of the individual, but of which I can obtain no classification,—and a second, on the produce of the land, from which garden fruits are exempted, as also is silk ; but grain of every kind, and cotton, are taken in the proportion of one-tenth of the whole yield for the use of the emperor.

‘ Khoten receives from Russia, broad cloths, a fine cloth manufactured at Astrakhan from the wool of the camel foal (of the first year), seal skins and other furs, green velvet, gold and silver thread for embroidery, Bulgar leather, hardware—amongst which are spades or hoes,—logwood, sugar in loaf, and castor,—the latter being used as a medicine for children.

‘ Khoten returns to Russia,—but through the intervention of Tooranee traders,—silk cloths, raw silk, and cotton thread.

‘ Raw silk, both white and yellow, is first taken to Bokhara, there dyed of various colours, purchased by Nogaei traders, and transported across the great Kirghiz steppe to various parts of Russia. No fewer than a thousand camel-loads of undyed cotton thread are said to be also furnished to Russia by Khoten annually.

‘ From Bokhara, Khoten receives various commodities, but the principal consists of horses of a large size, of which about five hundred are annually imported.

‘ To Bokhara, Khoten sends silk goods, raw silk (although Bokhara itself raises much of this article), and coarse cottons, along with felts.

‘ To Yarkund, Indejan, Eela, and Aksoo, Khoten furnishes cotton and silk goods, as well as raw silk and cotton thread. Yarkund also takes off vast quantities of sheep-wool, which is there worked into felts, and, in return, sends rice and cast-iron pots for kitchen use.

‘ From Eela and Aksoo, Khoten receives droves of horses bred by the Kalmuks.

‘ To Eela alone Khoten sends, yearly, from two to three hundred thousand bales of a coarse cotton cloth like guzee ; the length of each piece is from seven to eight gurz (say yards), the breadth about twelve giruhs, and the *money price* is a rupee. At Eela these cloths are sold to the Kalmuks for money or bartered against cattle. About fifty thousand sheep are annually brought by the Kalmuks to Eela, and the rate of value in exchange adopted is one piece of cotton cloth for a sheep, three for a cow, and six for a horse.

‘ The trade between Hindooostan and Khoten was formerly very extensive ; and it is even said, though I presume rather figuratively, that a loaded cart could go all the way from Nugeebad to Sureekhea, in the mountains of Khoten. Sureekhea is said to be about half way between Yarkund and Karakash, on a road somewhat circuitous, and the following are the stages on the route to it from Yarkund, viz.

Yarkund to Karghalik	.	.	.	.	20 kos.
Karghalik to Bovera	.	.	.	.	12
To Cungar	.	.	.	.	12
Kileean	.	.	.	.	12
Kathae, or Chinese Choukee* Ourtung	.	.	.	.	12
Duran Ustee	.	.	.	.	12
Dereas Kara, the Black River	.	.	.	.	8
Shaheed Oollah Kojah	.	.	.	.	12
Sureekhea	.	.	.	.	24
					—
					124

Sureekhea was frequented by the merchants of Hindooostan on account of its quarries of jasper or agate, once much used for drinking cups and ornaments for the person. And although the white marble employed in the mausoleum at Agra and Sekomdra may have been extracted from the neighbourhood of Joudpoor, it is not improbable but that some of the materials for the flower work and tracery may have been brought from the mountains of Khoten †.

* ‘ Choukee is the Hindostanee and Ourtung the Tartar word for a military or police station.

† ‘ The road from Sureekhea towards Hindostan is reported to have passed by Rudokh and Gurkh-dokh, but at this latter point information stops. Perhaps the more direct line from Gurkh-dokh to Nugeebad lies across the Neetee Ghat, through Neetee, and probably by Joshee Muth, but I saw not any traces of an ancient road between Neetee and the Pindar river. Having crossed this stream and proceeded one march on our return in 1812, some demonstrations among the Goorkha troops who accompanied us, betrayed an intention to stop us, and this being supported by private communications from the peasantry to me, I determined to take a line of road parallel to that on which we had been previously disposed to go, but some miles distant, though joining it again in a day and a half’s journey.

‘ The object of this deviation was to avoid some narrow paths, through very high grass in low grounds, in which our progress might have been arrested without a favourable opportunity for employing resistance. My companion preferring the old road, I started soon after midnight on the new one, which led over the sides of mountains by a narrow but exposed path, from every point of which much of the adjoining country could be seen.

‘ In the early part of the forenoon I suddenly came upon a road continuous with the path, but much different in character. This road was about six feet in breadth, regularly and substantially paved with small pebbles in some parts, and in others formed of levelled rock. On the right hand the rock was cut up here and there somewhat in the form of a hall, and on the left side of the mountain, for some yards, was gently sloped downwards. In one part two conduits, or pipes, of a harder stone than that of the mountain land, of a different nature, delivered each a small stream of clear and excellent water from the rock into the road for the convenience of travellers. The

‘ *The Rivers of Khoten*.—The Karakash, Kara Dereas, or Black River (*Kara* meaning *black* in Toorkee, and *Kash, river*), proceeds from the mountains of Khoten, flows first from east to west as far as Shaheed, Oollah, Kojah, twenty-four kos, then north for twelve kos, where it receives the Toghreesoo river.

‘ This stream (which signifies the straight water, *Toghree*, in Toorkee, meaning *straight*, and *Soo, water*) takes its rise in the Karhlik Duvan, or Icy mountains (*Karlik, place of snow*, and *Duvan, mountain*). After this increase it turns to the north-east, and continues in this direction till it reaches the city of Karakash, situated on its left bank. The whole of this distance, or from the source of the river to this city, is about nine days journey.

‘ Pursuing its course in the same direction past the city of Yooroongkash, placed on its right bank, and within a quarter of a kos of its stream, in one day’s journey more, this river unites with the river of Yooroongkash.

‘ The Yooroongkash, or rapid river, has its source in the Haring-hoo Togh, or *blind* mountain, at three days journey east from the rise of the Karakash, but in the same chain. It flows in a straight line to the city of Yooroongkash. Its stream is smaller, but more rapid than that of the Karakash, and abounds also with jasper-agates*, which are more highly prized than those of the latter

whole road, which exceeded not a few hundred yards in length, was laid out with judgment, and executed with a solidity that had apparently long braved the influence of the seasons. Beginning abruptly, it ended as suddenly, and as if the last portion had been carried away by an earth-ship which had formed a bed for a current. But looking back, I saw, or fancied I saw, its long line sweeping easily across the face of the chain of hills I had skirted. On questioning the peasantry who carried my baggage, respecting the knowledge of this road, they stated that it was called the Badshah’s road, and was very ancient.

‘ Hearing some of them say, that it was the *Rae* or *Rajrah*, and not recollecting that the Rajahs of these mountains had been tributary to the Mogul emperor of Delhi, I told my informers that they probably meant the Rajah’s road, to which an intelligent old man observed, that it was not made by any Rajah, but by some Badshah whose name he had never heard. He had heard, he said, that in ancient times much commerce* was carried on by it between Hindooostan and some very distant countries. The fragment I allude to is a few kos, as far as my memory serves, to the north-east of the village of Bundalee, which lies, I conceive, to the north-west of the ruined fort of Chandpoor. Perhaps this may have been part of the road to Khoten, and if so, it is presumed not to be improbable that more of its line might be made out by the intelligent and zealous officers employed in surveying that region of the hills.

* ‘ A widely spread belief obtains in Asia, that if poison intended for the destruction of man be put into a jasper-agate cup, the vessel will fly into pieces, and thus betray the quality of its contents. It is thought by some orientals, that liquor drank from a cup of jasper-agate has the power of tranquillizing irregular actions of the heart, especially if aided by rubbing with their vessel the region of this organ, and also the mouth and surrounding parts. It is also reported that any ornament of this material has the quality of diverting from the person of the wearer the stroke of lightning. Absurd as Europeans may consider such attributes, prejudices, sanctioned by antiquity, have great influence on the minds of the inhabitants of the eastern world.

* In regard to the commerce once carried on between Hindooostan and Khoten, see *Abulghazis’ Evidence*, note 310. Mars. Marco Polo; and for the resort of the merchants from Khoten to Delhi, in the reign of Shah Juhan, see the history of that sovereign.

river. The same precautions are adopted on this river as on the Karakash, to prevent the stones being obtained by private persons.

‘ The river of Yarkund rises from the northern side of the mountains of Kara Korum, opposite to the source of the river Shayook*, on the southern face of the same mountain. On quitting the Kara Korum range, it holds a northerly and straight course for two days journey to *Ak Togh*, or the white mountain, then south one day’s journey to Khafaloon Tushgood, then northerly for two days journey to Kirghiz Jungul, proceeding in the same direction for six days journey to Togh-doong-bash, or the lofty mountain; then still north for three days journey to Koshherul (or between two waters), where it receives the river of Surakol, a tolerably large stream, that rises in the mountain of Chechuklik (or place of flowers, *Chechuk* signifying *flowers*), one day’s journey to the west. The river arising from the junction of the two streams at Koshherul thenceforward takes the name of the Yarkund river, proceeding easterly for eight kos to the town of Post Karn, or Kurn, and retaining this direction for six kos further, reaches Bish Kint, then goes straight north for five kos, and east five kos, towards Yarkund, which is five kos from the river on the west. From this it continues to pursue an eastern course, and after passing through a woody tract for ten days, mixes its waters with those of the Karakash and Yooroongkash in one common conflux. The name of the river resulting from this triple union is not known to my informant, but it proceeds to the eastward for three days journey, when it receives the Aksoo river, which comes from the north.

‘ The Aksoo river rises by several streams, some on the Duvan Borlund (or high mountain) to the north of Toorfan. One is said to arise in the country of the Kirghiz, and another near Eela, each about twelve days journey in length. They unite at the city of Turfan, or Toorfan Yungee, New Toorfan. The common trunk goes for three days journey south to Aksoo. From Aksoo, still holding a southern direction for five days journey, it falls into the river of the three streams of Karakash, Yooroongkash, and Yarkund, but of which the name is not ascertained. The trunk, after this union, proceeds eastward for six days journey to Baee, a small town, thence still maintaining its

* ‘ The Chanthan Gurdoch, or Leh river, the long eastern branch of the Indus, receives the Lingtee-Choo, or Zauskur river, at Neema, eight or nine kos to the west, and a little south of Leh, on the road to Kashmeer. The Shayook, a broader river than the common stream of the Leh and Lingtee, unites with this trunk at Khafaloon (not Khafaloon Tushgoon) nine days journey west of Neema. This Khafaloon is the chief town of the Raj of that name, which has the Raj of Ladakh to the east, and that of Little Tibut to the west, distant three days journey from Baltee, the capital of the latter. The state of Khafaloon, of small extent, contains two thousand houses, and about twelve thousand inhabitants.

eastern course for one or two days journey reaches Saceram, and onwards for five days journey more goes to Koocha, thence in ten or twelve days journey to Karashuhr, the Black City, thence ten or twelve days journey to Ooroomchoo, thence twelve days journey to the city of Toorfan, Iskee, or Old Toorfan. Having held an easterly course from Koocha, it maintains the same direction from Iskee, Toorfan, through an uninhabited tract, in some parts mountainous, in others sandy, in others woody, forty days journey, when it reaches Kamool, a very large city situated in China. The whole of the country through which the river has yet run was formerly under the rule of the Moosulman Rajah or chief of Yarkund, and the population is a mixture of Moosulmans and Chinese.

‘ From Kamool, the river, continuing its course easterly into China, after twenty days journey, through a sandy desert, greatly deficient in water, reaches Lunjoo (Lanchen of Marco Polo), a city containing fifty thousand houses. From Lunjoo, still keeping its easterly direction for ten or twelve days journey, it arrives at Secampoor, a large city, the inhabitants of which are wholly, or almost wholly, Moosulmans, or, as they are there called, Turganee. From Secampoor, going eastward, in twenty days journey it reaches another large city (Sochen, M. Polo).

‘ The names of the other cities, or places, visited by this river in the subsequent part of its course in China, are not known to my informant; but he has always understood that it takes a large sweep to the west, and, quitting China, falls into the Irtish. My informant has gone no farther than Aksoo, but a Yarkundee merchant, his friend, who accompanied the Governor, Hakim of Yarkund, to Peking and back, gave him the information which relates to the course of the river in China.

‘ The preceding information was obtained through inquiries respecting Khoten producing rhubarb, which it does, though not as an article of commerce; and although its materials may stand with little relative connexion, and may present many chasms, I have thought it preferable to submit them in their present form, rather than defer doing it under the hope of making the sketch less imperfect, lest the accidents which may occur in such a journey as is before me may prevent its being done at all.

‘ If the sources of the Irtish are really to be found in the country appertaining to Yarkund as recited, and that the common stream make the detour described, the Irtish may rank with some of the longest rivers in the world. Whilst my informant confines his relation to circumstances known to himself, I give him full credit for inquiry, observation, and veracity; but suspicions arise in regard to the accuracy of the account given by his friend.

‘ The retrograde course of such a river, for such a vast distance,

seems in itself little probable ; probabilities, however, are of small importance when opposed to the contrary and positive assertion of a respectable reporter. But the placing Lunjoo, as first visited by the river, seems to be an inaccuracy, and fixing Soogoo to the eastward of the former city, is a decided mistake, either of the original reporter or of my informant.

‘ The order of the progression of the river may be accounted for by a sweep ; but the relative situation of the two cities is an error, as, by observations made by the Jesuits, the portion of Kanchen between See Chew to the west, and Lanchen to the east, is ascertained.

‘ Had the reporter stated that, from Kamool, the river had retrograded into the Irtish, the account would have been less open to doubt ; but when it is made by him to reach Lanchen, it is much more likely that it should disembogue into the Hoango. Having given my doubts, it is only candid to observe, that the Igours, from their original country of Turfan, migrate to the banks of the Irtish. And if the streams of their original country fall into the Irtish, this is easily conceivable.’

II.—*Account of Danish Discoveries on the East Coast of Greenland in 1829.*

THE question respecting the existence of Icelandic colonies on the East coast of Greenland, anterior to the fourteenth century, when they were supposed to have been lost, has long been one of some historical and geographical interest ; and although considered by the learned writer of the annexed letter to be now settled, appears still to admit of plausible reasoning on both sides. Of the particulars now given, as bearing on it, the greater number were communicated to the Royal Geographical Society of London, in a letter addressed by Captain Zahrtmann, Hydrographer Royal, Copenhagen, to Captain Beaufort, and read to the Society at its second meeting, in November last. But the following narrative has been preferred, being an official report sent, by order of the Prince of Denmark, to the Geographical Society of Paris, and somewhat more minute :—

‘ For some ages back the kings of Denmark have fitted out expeditions from time to time, with a view of re-discovering that part of Greenland which is said to have been formerly peopled by a colony from Iceland, but of which the trace was lost about the end of the fourteenth century. The persons charged with these expeditions have been as follows :—In the reign of Frederick II., Maguus Heinesen ; in the reign of Christian IV., Jens Munk, Godske, Lindenou, and Carsten Richardsen ; in the reign of